

Emergency Medical and Transport Services (EMS)

- Chronology of Events

- September 20, 2002 - Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare, Inc., (TMH) announced that it would discontinue ground ambulance and Lifelight air ambulance services in Leon County by June 30, 2003.
- September 24, 2002 - The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) directed staff to schedule a workshop to discuss the future provisions of emergency ground and air transport services in Leon County. The BOCC directed:
- 1) that a request be filed with TMH to extend services to September 30, 2002.
 - 2) that a committee of surrounding county representatives, the City, the County, the Sheriff and TMH to consider air ambulance services in Leon County.
- October 22, 2002 - A BOCC Workshop was held on Provision of EMS in Leon County. The BOCC directed the EMS Advisory Council (EMSAC) to further study provision of EMS in Leon County and return to the Board by November 30, 2002 with recommendations. EMSAC is comprised of the following:
- County Administrator
 - City Manager
 - Administrator of TMH
 - Administrator of TCH
 - Emergency Medical Director of TMH
 - Emergency Medical Director of TCH
- November 7, 2002 County staff coordinated an Air Ambulance meeting between the EMSAC and representatives from surrounding counties to discuss the continuation of Air Ambulance service in the region. The EMSAC and surrounding county representatives continued to meet regularly through December 13, 2002 to discuss issues surrounding Air Ambulance.
- November 26, 2002 - EMSAC presented their recommendations to the BOCC during the regular Board meeting. EMSAC's recommendation was to issue an RFP for provision of EMS.
- The BOCC declined the recommendation and directed that the EMSAC be expanded to include representation from the following:
- Tallahassee Fire Department
 - Volunteer Fire Departments
 - TMH's Paramedics/EMTs
 - Board of County Commissioners

The BOCC directed EMSAC to: 1) explore a hospital model; Tallahassee Fire Department to provide the services; and a County EMS Department; 2) consider program funding expense; 3) recommend a funding source; 4) ensure that current EMS personnel have first preference in hiring.

December 12, 2002

EMSAC met to review their charge and develop a work plan. After thorough discussion, EMSAC appointed a Technical Subcommittee to: 1) define the current level of EMS; and (2) define an enhanced level of service. Membership representatives on the Technical Subcommittee were:

TMH EMS Medical Director
TMH EMS Director
City of Tallahassee - Chief Fire Department
TMH EMS EMT/Paramedics
Volunteer Fire Departments

Current level of services was defined in terms of Response times and Fractile Reliability factors; training level of personnel; appropriateness of equipment; standards of care; and customer satisfaction.

December 16, 2002

The Technical Subcommittee reviewed and analyzed data collected on the above criteria. Response times and fractiles for the Remote areas of the Leon County were discussed as well as the utility of Advanced Life Support (ALS) in the City-managed County Fire Stations.

December 17, 2002

The Technical Subcommittee considered: 1) Response times and fractiles in the unincorporated areas of the County to include the Fire Station on Bannerman road; 2) an additional 24/7 ambulance to be located based on peak load demand and geographic area; 3) Medical direction at County Level; 4) fully integrated CAD for all EMS responders; 5) Analysis of current ambulance vehicle fleet; and 6) personnel.

December 19, 2002

The EMSAC received and reviewed the report of the Technical Subcommittee. The Technical Subcommittee reported: 1) that the current level of service by TMH EMS and Tallahassee Fire Departments response time and fractiles were well within national standards and the response time and fractiles of other Florida jurisdictions of similar size and geography; 2) that ALS non-transport capability be considered for the City-managed County fire stations

- including Bannerman Road; and 3) one additional 24/7 ambulance be available and located based on peak load call demand and geographic area.
- January 3, 2003 - EMSAC finalized its discussions and findings for a report to the BOCC.
- January 14, 2003 - EMSAC reviewed and approved its report to the BOCC.
- January 28, 2003 - EMSAC submits its Findings and Final Recommendation to the Board during a Workshop. Board directed staff to develop a contract with TFD for the provisions of EMS dispatch and ALS Medical and Transport services.
- February 11, 2003 - During this regular BCC meeting, the Board ratified the actions taken at the January 28, 2003 Workshop and directed staff to contract for the services of an EMS Medical Director, prepare RFPs for EMS Billing/Collections and Air Ambulance Services.
- February 25, 2003 - The Board approved, in cooperation with the City of Tallahassee, the retention of the EMS Consulting firm selected by the City, Fitch and Associates, LLC for the development of detailed business and program performance specifications.
- March 25, 2003 - During a workshop on EMS Funding Alternatives/Elimination of the Fire MSTU, the Board voted to continue to evaluate municipal marketing revenues as an EMS funding alternative, to draft an ordinance and schedule a public hearing to establish an independent EMS MSTU and work with the City to develop a concurrent ordinance, and explore other first year funding alternatives.
- March 26, 2003 - A Steering Committee was created to work with Fitch and Associates in the development of a detailed business and program performance specifications. The Steering Committee comprised the following :
- The City Manager
 - The Assistant City Manager
 - The County Administrator
 - The Assistant County Administrator
 - The County Director of Health and Human Services
- Also participating on the Steering Committee as required were: City Finance Director and County Director of Budget and Management.

- March 27, 2003 through
May 23, 2003 - In addition to the Steering Committee, the Consultants worked with the following City and County personnel: City Fire Department; City Police Communications Department; City Attorney's office; City Personnel office; City Risk Management office; and City Labor Relations office. County Office of Budget and Management; County Attorney's office and Director of Health and Human Services.
- April 28, 2003 through
May 16, 2003 - A Selection Committee comprised of representatives from TFD, TMH Paramedics and County Administration reviewed the proposals submitted for the Invitation to Negotiate for Air Ambulance Services and selected Air Methods with whom to pursue contract negotiations.
- May 22, 2003 - A Selection Committee comprised of representatives from TFD, TMH Paramedics and County Administration reviewed the proposals submitted for the Invitation to Negotiate for EMS Medical Direction and selected Dr. Escobar with whom to pursue contract negotiations.
- May 27, 2003 - Consultants present recommendations to the Board during a workshop. The BOCC authorized the scheduling of a public hearing for June 10, 2003 for establishing a EMS MSTU with a maximum millage rate of ½ mill and accepted the EMS consultant's report with Option B: Advanced Life Support First response as the desired level of service. The BOCC directed the County Administrator to finalize a performance-based contract with the City of Tallahassee for the provision of EMS services.
- May 28, 2003 - Consultants present recommendations to the City Commissioner during their regular meeting. The Commissioners directed the City Manager to "go forward with negotiating a contract with the County as discussed for the provision of EMS."

The Commission suggested that the City Manager convey to the County Administrator the City's desire to establish an appropriate payment process for a shared venture in which neither government made a profit from the other while the County provided the funding and the City provided the service on a full cost recovery basis, and that extra time be allowed for the City to get prepared to offer the services.

The Commission also authorized the City Manager to proceed with concurrent negotiations towards closing the perceived \$1 million financial gap in the current City-County Fire Services Agreement.

The County is in full compliance with the Fire Services Agreement and has made all payments in accordance with the agreement.

During this meeting, the City also scheduled the Public Hearing to consent to the inclusion of the Emergency Medical Services Municipal Service Taxing Unit (MSTU), subject to termination provisions, for June 11, 2003.

- May 29, 2003 - Prompted by discussions with the City, County staff began discussions with TMH regarding extension of EMS operation through December 31, 2003.
- June 10, 2003 - BOCC ratified actions of the May 27, 2003 EMS Workshop. Also on this date, the BOCC held a public hearing on the proposed EMS MSTU and authorized ordinance, with the maximum millage rate in the ordinance to be set at 0.5 mills.
- June 11, 2003 - The City Commission held a public hearing on the proposed EMS MSTU and tabled the issue for further discussion.
- June 12, 2003 - County Administrator, Assistant County Administrator, Director of Budget and Management, Representative of County Attorney's office, and Director of Health and Human Services met with the City Manager, Assistant City Manager, City Attorney and City Finance Director. The City outlined their concerns in the EMS Consultants contract and performance specifications and put a number of proposals on the table (see attached).
- June 13, 2003 - The County administrator emphasized that savings generated by the City's efficient operation of the EMS program should be shared between the City and County as follows: fifty (50 %) per cent to the County for a rate stabilization fund; fifty (50%) per cent to the City; twenty five percent (25%) for EMS employee bonuses and twenty five (25%) for EMS union employee rate increases.
- June 13, 2003 - Staff received formal letter from TMH agreeing to extend provision of EMS through December 31, 2003 (Attachment #5).